

Collins, Carly

From: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:41 AM
To: Lilley, Bliss
Cc: Collins, Carly
Subject: FW: myletter.pdf - Adobe Reader
Attachments: myletter.pdf

-----Original Message-----

From: skubes@co.rice.mn.us [mailto:skubes@co.rice.mn.us]
Sent: Thursday, July 02, 2009 9:26 AM
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC
Subject: myletter.pdf - Adobe Reader

I-220-001

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded you comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

WHAT IS YOUR IMPACT?

Hello. My name is Sonja Kubes, and we live in Lanesburgh Township in section 14. I want to start by saying that I'm disgusted that this entire CAPX2020 project is even still up for debate. I have yet to meet one single person who is in favor of this ridiculous project. This project has upset the entire foundation in this community. I don't care what route you are on...I'm sorry that the route issue is even up for debate. I am truly hoping that we can win the "big battle" and put an end to the CAPX2020 project all together, but if that is not on the table for debate, then I have to try and win the little battle by telling you a little bit about what my ranch offers the community.

We own and operate Sand Creek Ranch. It is a quarter horse and cattle performance/breeding stable and arena. Our ranch is located on your **alternate** route in LeSueur County on County Road 164 (141st Ave.) outside of New Prague, MN. The power lines may go right down our 12 acre hay field, the only hay field we desperately need to maintain a reasonable life. It will be within close proximity to our farm yard, several metal pole sheds, and our pastures. However, as our business grows, we have plans to build an indoor arena, an additional stall barn for horse/cattle competitors and vendors. A ROW power line taking over half our hay field would greatly impact our livelihoods by preventing us from growing our business. Because of the issue that machinery cannot be safely operated around these lines, we would lose a lot of hay. This hay feeds our livestock.

If we can't operate our machinery safely, we lose money. We will have to spend money to buy a lot of hay; this directly impacts our financial bottom line. Besides the fact that the value of the property would decrease astronomically. This is a livestock ranch, and should remain as one with the numerous nice farm buildings, pastures, and home.

For us to run a successful business we NEED our hay that is harvested from that field. We harvest approximately 3000+ bales of good grass hay from that field every year. We can support our entire herd of cattle and all the performance horses from this field. We do not need to buy any outside hay....which we all know is a very big expense. We will lose this self-sufficiency if we lose any part of our hay field and pasture land.

If the power system goes through our hay field, our business will be grossly

negatively impacted. We will be in peril. We have spent many years growing our business. We expect to spend many more years growing our business. This land is our livelihood and a lifestyle we choose.

We moved here 30 years ago. We moved to LeSueur County, an Agri-County. We moved out of Scott County which was already becoming unfriendly to Agri-Business. LeSueur County is still, and will continue for many years to be, primarily an Agri-County. All around us are families with both small and large-sized Agri interests. There are numerous horse entities, dairy farms, and crop farmers.

The impact on our ranch, livestock and family is devastating to the success of our business and the health of our family and animals. We average between 20-30 horses and 20-30 head of cattle on the ranch. Training, boarding and breeding horses plus sponsoring rodeos, cutting and team roping jackpots are our livelihood, as well as our lifestyle. We have three children who are growing up with horses and the wonderful ranching lifestyle that includes family and friends.

We are active supporters of LeSueur County 4-H and MN High School Rodeo by providing numerous youth training clinics and lessons for their benefit. We do NOT want to lose this way of life for them or us. If the power line goes through our property, we will not be able to keep things as they are for them, the youth, or our customers.

Surrounding the farm yard, there are 25+ acres of cattle/horse pastures that are enclosed with 4-strand hot wire fencing with mostly steel fence posts, pastures surrounded by pipe fencing, and metal gates, besides the numerous automatic waterers. If waterers are subject to any type of electro magnetic field or stray voltage, the livestock will not drink because of their high sensitivity to electric currents. Horses and cattle MUST have constant water to survive because without water availability, they will not eat. The ground on the ranch is a high mix of peat with some clay. Peat ground holds more moisture (hence high hay production we have), but will also be a conduit for the electro magnetic field from the power lines.

This is unacceptable for maintaining a livestock ranch.

If we need to replace the 25+ acres of hot wire and steel pipe fencing, the cost

is prohibitive. And, how do we water this much livestock every day with a sufficient amount of water?? We would be forced to stop using the automatic metal waterers and use rubber tubs with no way to transport the water to these tubs that the livestock requires on a daily basis. What do we do in the winter to keep the tubs from freezing?? Will we have to spread miles of extension cords to power these tank heaters hoping that there is no electric feed-back from the power lines...and don't forget the astronomical electric bill costs.

In closing, we are asking your company to please, please hear our concerns and objections to placing the power lines in our neighborhood; the work and planning was done for good reason for the primary route. We are NOT your primary route for business economical reasons; the extreme added costs to run the power lines on the alternate route is not good business for you, or us. Those high added costs will, we're sure, be passed on to taxpayers who are already financially stressed in these horrible economical times.

Please, preserve our ranch for our children, the youth in our community and our agri-business lifestyle.

Please say "NO" to Capx2020!

Sincerely,

Sonja Kubes

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